



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



Brussels, 12 March 2013
7435/13
(OR. en)
PRESSE 110

Electoral period for next European Parliament to be advanced

The Permanent Representatives Committee¹ today endorsed a draft Council decision bringing forward the period of the next European Parliament's elections from 5-8 June to 22-25 May 2014. The draft decision's main objective is to ensure optimal conditions for the elections and hereby to strengthen the European Parliament's legitimacy. It also responds to a request by the European Parliament. In 2005 the Parliament asked to bring forward the date of the election to May so that it can better organise itself to expedite the election of the new Commission President and avoid the beginning of the summer vacation in several member states.

The draft decision still needs to be formally adopted by the Council by unanimity after having consulted the European Parliament.

Background

The election period provided for by the 1976 Electoral Act (5-8 June 2014) coincides with the week-end of Pentecost, a period which in many member states is part of school holidays. The Electoral Act enables the Council, after consulting the European Parliament, to determine another electoral period if it proves impossible to hold the European Parliament elections during the "default" period. However, the new electoral period may not be more than two months before or one month after the period foreseen by the Electoral Act. In the past, the Council decided on two occasions to change the electoral period of the European Parliament (for the 1984 and 1989 elections).

¹ The Permanent Representatives Committee is composed of the ambassadors of the 27 EU member states. Its role is to prepare decisions of the Council.

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